

## **ABSTRACT**

**THESIS:** Research on the Effects of Using Design Thinking as an Ideation Tool

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Design thinking and its potential for innovation has been a recent topic of debate among practitioners and scholars. However, little data exists to support or refute the efficacy and/or superiority of design thinking as a mechanism for novel idea generation. To further explore the nature and practice of design thinking, this exploratory pilot study chronicles an experiment with thirty-four participants and is designed to investigate the efficacy of using design thinking as an ideation tool. The participants were divided into two categories: general ideation and design thinking. Within each category, smaller groups were convened. Groups in the general ideation category were asked to develop ideas for solving a specific problem using any method of choice (other than design thinking). Groups within the design thinking category were asked to use a design thinking strategy called “saturate and group” to develop ideas to solve the same problem. Findings from the study revealed that there was no difference between the design thinking and the general ideation categories in terms of the quality of the ideas they created. The study discussed the implications of these findings and offered suggestions for future research.